[14th December 1953

Release of lands in the reserve forests for cultivation of food-crops.

* 29 *Q.*—SRI K. VENKATARAMANA GOWDA: Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state whether the Government have received the recommendations of the South Kanara District Food Production Committee to release suitable lands in the reserve forests for cultivation of food-crops and if so the action taken thereon?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" No such recommendations were made by the District Food Production Committee, South Kanara."

Slump in the coir industry.

* 30 *Q.*—SRI C. KUNHIRAMA KURUP: Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state what steps the Government have taken to ward off the slump in the coir industry?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" The following steps have been taken by the Government to alleviate the distress caused to the coir industry since the middle of 1952 :—

(1) Circulars have been issued to the Heads of several Departments of Government and local bodies in this State to encourage the purchase of coir and coir goods.

(2) Manufactured coir goods are displayed in all industrial and commercial museums and sales are effected from the emporia attached to some of the museums.

(3) The Industries Department has been participating in all the exhibitions held in the State, where the manufactured coir goods are displayed and important and up-to-date processes of manufacture of coir goods are demonstrated.

(4) To restore the demand for coir and coir goods in foreign countries, the Government of India have addressed the Indian Government Trade Representatives abroad to do everything possible to stimulate coir trade. Coir and coir goods have also been included in current trade agreements with Austria, Finland, Germany, Hungary and Norway to ensure a steady market for these goods.

These steps will go a long way not only to alleviate the present distress, if any, to the coir industry, but also to help to ward off any slump in the future.

The following proposals are still under consideration in consultation with the Government of India :—

(1) To induce the Navy to obtain its requirements of coir ropes from this State, especially from the Co-operative or Industries Department.

(2) To secure Railway freight concession for coir and coir goods for movement by goods train.